

STATE OF MONTANA
Department of Public Health and Human Services

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM APPLICATION

If you need assistance completing this application, please ask an Office of Public Assistance (OPA) staff member.

COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) offers several programs to help you. This application is to be used if you are applying for food stamp benefits only. If you wish to apply for programs other than the Food Stamp Program, please request a multiple program application.

1. If you don't have time to complete the full application now:

- Fill in your name and address on page one;
- Sign your name on page one (or an authorized representative may sign for you); and
- Turn in only the top copy of page one today. You may take the rest of the application with you and bring it with you to your interview, or you may mail or fax it to the Public Assistance Office.

2. If you have completed the application process and are determined eligible for food stamp benefits, your benefits will start from the date page one of the application is received.
3. **You may be entitled to receive food stamp benefits within seven days (expedited service).** See the back of page one of the application for details.
4. Complete the entire application to the best of your ability.
5. Please use black or blue ink (it is easy to read and copies best). Print your answers.
6. If more space is needed to answer a question(s), use the space provided on page eight, or attach an additional sheet with appropriate information about each additional person.
7. A household member, or an authorized representative, who knows the financial situation of all household members should fill out the application.
8. Providing a Social Security number or citizenship/alien status is voluntary. However, if this information is not provided for a household member, he/she will not be eligible for benefits, with certain exceptions. Any question that refers to a household is referring to those people applying for benefits. You need to enter the Social Security number and citizenship/alien status only for individuals requesting food stamp benefits.

DPHHS-HCS-252 (New 11/2004) STATE OF MONTANA Department of Public Health and Human Services FOOD STAMP PROGRAM APPLICATION					AGENCY USE Date Application Received Date of Interview Case Number Expedited FS Regular FS				
SHADED AREAS ARE FOR AGENCY USE ONLY									
Last Name		First Name		Middle Initial		County			
Street Address				City				Zip	
Mailing Address				City				Zip	
Phone Number				Message Phone Number					
Note: If you do not have a street address, describe how to get to your home: 									
Fill in all required blanks for everyone who lives with you either permanently or temporarily, whether you consider them household members or not. List yourself first, then your spouse and children, and any others who purchase and prepare food with you.									
Name		Relationship to You		Social Security Number		Date of Birth		Sex (Optional)	
								U.S. Citizen	
								Yes No	
1.		SELF							
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
EXPEDITED SERVICE QUESTIONS				AGENCY USE				Yes No	
If the dollar amount is none, enter zero.				Income less than \$150, and cash and savings of no more than \$100?					
What is the total income (before deductions) your household has received or expects to receive this month ?				Combined income and resources less than rent/mortgage and utilities/SUA (if eligible)?					
How much do the members of your household have in cash and savings? (give your best estimate)				Migrant/seasonal farm worker with liquid resources not exceeding \$100?					
How much is your monthly rent/mortgage?				If yes to any of the above questions – EXPEDITE					
				Screened for expedited services?				Yes No	
How much are your monthly utilities?				Eligible for expedited services?					
Is anyone in your household a migrant or seasonal farm worker?				Yes No		OPA Employee:			
PENALTY WARNING I HEREBY SWEAR AND/OR AFFIRM THAT THE STATEMENTS MADE ON THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.									
Applicant Signature/Mark (or Legal Guardian)		X				Date			
Witness to Mark (If applicant cannot sign full name)		X				Date			

INTERVIEW

1. After your application is filed, you will be notified of the date and time of your interview. Complete as much of the application as you can. A worker will help you with any unanswered questions at the interview. If you do not have all the necessary information, this could delay a decision on your application.
2. If you are not able to appear for an interview, or you are unable to find someone to represent you, call your local Office of Public Assistance to schedule a home visit or a phone interview.
3. If you cannot keep your appointment, you must schedule another appointment within 30 days of the application date. If you do not schedule another appointment, your application will be denied.

TO GET FOOD STAMP BENEFITS WITHIN SEVEN DAYS (EXPEDITED SERVICE)

You may be entitled to expedited services if your income and resources are not enough to cover your monthly rent/mortgage and utilities, you have very little income or resources, or your household includes a migrant or seasonal farm worker.

1. Complete the application and provide proof of identity of the person listed as number one on page one.
2. If you do not have time to complete this application now, complete the front page and turn it in today. This will ensure your benefits will start from today if you complete the application process and are determined eligible for food stamp benefits.
3. If you are eligible for expedited service, you can receive food stamp benefits for this month even if you cannot give us all of the verification we need.
4. If you feel you are eligible for expedited services but your worker says you are not, you may ask for an administrative conference. If no resolution occurs, then you may request a Fair Hearing either orally or in writing.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. You have the right to file an application on the same day you contact us. You may either leave the entire application or the completed front page at the office, or you may mail it.
2. You do not have to be interviewed or have a scheduled appointment before submitting the application.
3. Your application will be processed within 30 days.
4. Applicants soon to be released from an institution may make application for food stamp benefits prior to their release. The application filing date for pre-release applicants is the date of release from the institution.
5. **It is illegal to:**
 - Trade or sell food stamp benefits;
 - Use food stamp benefits to get ineligible items such as alcoholic drinks and tobacco; or
 - Use someone else's food stamp benefits for your household.
6. You will be required to repay any benefits that you are not eligible to receive because of a client or agency error.
7. In accordance with federal law and U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Under the Food Stamp Act and USDA policy, discrimination is also prohibited on the basis of religion or political beliefs. To file a complaint of discrimination, contact USDA or HHS. Write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington DC, 20250-9410 or call (202) 619-0403 (voice) or (202) 619-3257 (TTD).

WORK REQUIREMENTS

1. Individuals who are physically and mentally fit and between the ages of 16 and 60 shall be ineligible for food stamp benefits if they: (1) refuse without good cause to provide sufficient information to allow a determination of their employment status or job availability; (2) voluntarily and without good cause quit a job; or (3) voluntarily and without good cause reduce their work effort (and after the reduction, are working less than 30 hours a week).
2. Individuals who live in a county with a Food Stamp Employment and Training Program may attend this program.

TIME-LIMITED BENEFITS

1. An individual who is an able-bodied adult without dependents may not be eligible for food stamp benefits if they have received three months of food stamp benefits in a 36-month period, unless they meet an exemption or meet the work requirement.

PENALTIES

1. **It is unlawful for you to knowingly make false statements, misrepresent facts, or conceal information to obtain benefits.**
2. **Individuals who knowingly or intentionally break a food stamp rule can be prosecuted and fined. The fine may be up to \$250,000 or you may be imprisoned for up to 20 years, or both. Individuals are also subject to prosecution under other applicable federal laws.**
3. **Any household member who knowingly and intentionally breaks a food stamp rule can be barred from participating in the Food Stamp Program for one year for the first violation; two years for the second violation; and permanently disqualified after the third violation.**
4. **Any food stamp recipient who has been found guilty in a federal, state, or local court of trading food stamp benefits for controlled substances (illegal drugs or certain drugs for which a doctor's prescription is required) will be disqualified from participation in the Food Stamp Program for two years for the first offense, and permanently for the second offense.**
5. **Any food stamp recipient who has been found guilty in a federal, state, or local court of trading food stamp benefits for firearms, ammunition, or explosives will be permanently disqualified from participation in the Food Stamp Program.**
6. **An individual shall be permanently disqualified from participation in the Food Stamp Program if he/she is convicted of trafficking food stamp benefits of \$500 or more.**
7. **An individual shall be ineligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program for ten years if he/she is found to have made a fraudulent statement or representation with respect to identity and/or residence in order to receive multiple benefits simultaneously.**

1.	You can choose an authorized representative to help you with your food stamp benefits.									
Please check yes or no for each of the following questions.								Yes	No	
Do you need your authorized representative to help you apply for food stamp benefits?										
Do you want your authorized representative to have access to your Montana Access Food Stamp Account, and use your benefits to buy food for you?										
List the authorized representative's name, address, and telephone number below. You can name multiple authorized representatives. If additional representatives are named please complete the following information on page eight.										
Last Name				First Name				Middle Initial		
Phone				City				Zip		
Mailing Address										
Please check yes or no for each of the following questions								Yes	No	
2.	Has anyone listed on page one ever used another name (e.g., maiden name) or Social Security number? If yes, please provide other names and numbers used:									
3.	Is any household member currently attending post-secondary school or an institution of higher education? If yes, list who is attending, the name and location of the school, and the number of class hours the student is attending.								Yes	No
VOLUNTARY: Please complete questions 4 and 5 for all household members. These questions regarding ethnic and racial background will not be used to determine your eligibility or benefit level. If you do not answer, your worker will complete this section. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 authorizes questions about ethnic and racial background. The reason for the information is to assure that program benefits are distributed without regard to race, color or national origin.										
4.	Please mark one <i>ethnic category</i> for each household member.									
Household Member Name						Hispanic/Latino		Non-Hispanic/Latino		
5.	Please mark one or more <i>racial heritage categories</i> for each household member.									
Household Member Name		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander		Black or African American		White	

6.	Indicate whether any household member (including children) own any of the following property and/or accounts. Include property/accounts jointly owned with others in or outside the household.							
Property/Account	Yes	No	Owner(s)/ Joint Owner(s)	Name of Financial Institution	Amount			
Cash								
Checking Account								
Savings Account								
Certificate of Deposit (CD)								
Individual Indian Money Account(s)								
Retirement Account(s)								
Stocks/Bonds								
Trust Fund(s)								
Other (specify):								
7.	Indicate whether any household members own or are purchasing any of the following property. Include property co-owned with others in or outside the household.							
Property	Yes	No	Owner(s)/ Joint Owners	Location/ Account Number	Amount Owed	For Sale		Agency Use Equity
						Yes	No	
Burial Trust/Contract/Policy								
Contract(s) for Deed								
Farm/Business Equipment								
Home You Live In (include mobile homes)								
Income Producing Property								
Life Estate								
Livestock								
Mineral Rights (oil, gas, coal, etc.)								
Other Houses, Land, or Buildings								
Tools/Equipment for Work								
Other (specify):								
8.	Has any household member sold, traded, or given away any money, property, or other assets within the last three months?						Yes	No
If yes, complete the information below:								
Household Member's Name	Item Sold, Traded, or Given Away			Date Sold, Traded, or Given Away		Dollar Value		

9.	Indicate whether any household member has the following unearned income (income not from employment).					
		Yes	No	Owner(s)/ Joint Owners	How Often Paid	Gross Amount
Child Support/Alimony						
Foster Care Payments						
General Assistance (includes County/BIA)						
Gifts/Contributions						
Insurance Settlement						
Interest/Dividends						
Lease Income						
Loans						
Military Allotment						
Retirement Benefits/Pensions						
Royalties						
Social Security						
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)						
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families - TANF/ Tribal TANF						
Temporary Disability Insurance						
Tribal or Other State Assistance Payments						
Unemployment Insurance						
Veterans Benefits						
Workers' Compensation						
Other (specify):						
10.	Indicate whether any household member has applied for or received any student financial aid within the last 12 months.					
	Financial Aid	Yes	No	Household Member's Name	Dollar Amount	
Bureau of Indian Affairs						
Pell Grant						
Scholarships						
Student Loan						
Veterans' Assistance						
Vocational Rehabilitation						
Other (include family, work study, church, employer, etc.)						
11.	Has anyone in your household applied for or received Unemployment Insurance (UI) or Worker's Compensation (WC) within the last 12 months? If yes, complete the information below.				Yes	No
	Household Member's Name	Check Type of Income		Start Date	End Date	Reason Terminated/Denied
		UI	WC			

12.	Does anyone expect to receive any money before the end of the next calendar month (such as a settlement from a legal action, child support, retirement, pensions, disability, or accident insurance)? If yes, list what it is and who will be receiving the money.	Yes	No

AGENCY USE

Name of Injured Person		Date of Accident	
Lawyer's Name			

Person/Insurance company who is or may be responsible for paying any of these medical costs	
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Contributions/Gifts: Request information regarding the amount received (check policy).

13.	Is anyone in the household currently working or have they worked in the past 30 days?	Yes	No

List all household members who have worked, will work, or are currently working any kind of job this month, or will receive wages this month due to work done in a previous month. Include: employment (full-time and part-time), spot jobs, tips, commissions, work study, etc.

Complete a column for each job held by any household member

Person Employed			
This Month's Total Wages Before Taxes			
Business Name			
Business Address			
Business Phone			
Job Start Date			
Average Hours Per Week			
Pay Per Hour			
Average Tips Per Week			
How Often Paid			
Dates Pay Received			
Pay Period End Date			

PLEASE PROVIDE WAGE VERIFICATION FOR THIS MONTH AND LAST MONTH

14.	Is anyone in your household self-employed? If yes, list the name of the business, who owns it, and the kind of business it is:	Yes	No

PLEASE PROVIDE SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCOME AND EXPENSE RECORDS

AGENCY USE

15.	Has anyone in your household stopped working or reduced work hours in the last 30 days (including self-employment)? (If yes, fill in the information below.)	Yes	No
Household Member's Name			
Name of Employer			
Date Household Member Left Job or Reduced Hours			
Date and Amount of Final Check			
Reason for Leaving			
Is It a Temporary Layoff?			
Date Expected to Return to Work			
Include additional people on page eight			
16.	Is anyone in your household working in exchange for living expense(s) or housing cost(s)? If yes, please explain:	Yes	No
17.	List expenses for which you are billed and responsible to pay. If anyone outside the household pays any expense for the household, please write their name in the last column. List medical expenses only for household members who are elderly or disabled. If you do not report and verify expenses, the expense deduction will not be allowed.		
	Expense	Total Monthly Cost	Household's Share
	Child Support		Person Who Assists in Paying the Expense
	Dependent Care (adult or child)		
	Rent		
	Lot Rent		
	Mortgage		
	Home Insurance (if separate from mortgage)		
	Property Tax (if separate from mortgage)		
	Basic Phone Rate (land or cell phone)		
	Electricity		
	Garbage/Trash		
	Natural Gas/Propane		
	Oil		
	Utility Installation Fee (not deposit)		
	Water/Sewer		
	Wood/Coal/Other Heat Source		
	Medical Insurance Premiums		
	Medical Payments/Bills		
	Medicare Premiums		
	Other Expenses (specify)		
18.	Do you pay heating or cooling costs separate from rent?	Yes	No
19.	Are you approved for or receiving assistance from the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)?	Yes	No

20.	Choose one deduction by marking a box to the right.		Standard Utility Allowance (SUA)		
			Actual Utility Allowance		
Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) – The SUA is a standard deduction amount, which reflects the statewide average amount spent for specific utilities. If you are responsible to pay for heating or cooling costs, you may choose the SUA, which stays the same each month. If you receive LIEAP, you may choose the SUA even if you do not pay your own heating costs. (Ask your worker for the current SUA or if you have questions).					
Actual Utility Costs – If you choose to use actual costs, you will need to verify these costs or a deduction will not be allowed.					
AGENCY USE					
21.	If you indicated a dependent care expense, please complete the information below. Complete a column for each person receiving care.				
	Person Receiving Care				
	Amount Billed				
	Date Paid				
	Person Providing Care				
	Person Paying for Care				
	Program Paying for Care				
Please check yes or no for each of the following questions					
22.	Are any household members disabled? If yes, please list who is disabled.	Yes	No		
23.	Is anyone in your household on strike? If yes, please list who is on strike, when the strike began, the employer's name, and the amount of strike income:	Yes	No		
24.	Is anyone in your household certified to receive Tribal food commodities? If yes, who?	Yes	No		
25.	Has anyone in your household received food stamp benefits in the last 30 days? If yes, list who received them, where, and when:	Yes	No		
26.	Do you have a Montana Access Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card?	Yes	No		
27.	If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote today?	Yes	No		
<p>➤ If you do not check either of these boxes, you will be considered to have decided not to register to vote at this time.</p> <p>➤ If you would like help in filling out the Voter Registration Application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application form in private.</p> <p>➤ Applying to register or declining to register to vote will <u>not</u> affect your eligibility or benefit level.</p> <p>➤ If you believe someone has interfered with your right to register to vote or to decline to register to vote, or your privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, you may file a complaint with the Secretary of State, PO Box 202801, Helena, Montana 59620-2801; toll free telephone number: 1-888-884-8683.</p>					

28.	Have you, or any member of your household, ever been convicted of trafficking food stamp benefits of \$500 or more?	Yes	No
29.	Have you, or any member of your household, ever been disqualified from the Food Stamp Program? If yes, list the name of the person, date it happened, date disqualified, and the length of the disqualification period:	Yes	No
30.	Are you, or any member of your household, fleeing to avoid prosecution, or custody/confinement after conviction for a felony crime?	Yes	No
31.	Are you, or any member of your household, currently in violation of probation or parole?	Yes	No
32.	Are you, or any member of your household, a convicted felon (after August 22, 1996) for possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance (illegal drugs or certain drugs for which a doctor's prescription is required)?	Yes	No
33.	Have you or any member of your household been found guilty of trading food stamp benefits for drugs? If yes, who?	Yes	No
34.	Have you or any member of your household been found guilty of trading food stamp benefits for guns, ammunitions or explosives? If yes, who?	Yes	No

ADDITIONAL HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND SOMETHING, ASK YOUR WORKER ABOUT IT.

I UNDERSTAND THAT:

- **The information I (we) give here is subject to verification by federal and state officials. If any information is incorrect, my application may be denied and I may be subject to the criminal penalties for knowingly providing incorrect information.**
- I must report changes in my situation to the local Office of Public Assistance based on my reporting requirements, which have been explained. Late reporting may cause incorrect benefits.
- My (our) Social Security number(s) will be used by state and federal agencies to check identity of household members, to prevent duplicate participation, and to exchange information, by computer, with other agencies (Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, employers, and banks). The information obtained from these sources may affect my eligibility or benefit level. The Social Security number(s) may also be disclosed to law enforcement officials for the purpose of apprehending fleeing felons/probation or parole violators. It will also be used for claims collection purposes.
- My (our) alien status information will be verified with Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS). This information may affect my eligibility or benefit level.
- Federal and state laws and regulations limit the use and disclosure of confidential or protected health information about applicants and recipients of assistance programs.
- I may request a Fair Hearing orally or in writing if I disagree with any action taken on my case.

I understand the questions on this application and the penalty for withholding or giving false information or breaking any of the rules listed in the penalty warning. I understand and agree to provide documents to prove what I have stated on this application. I understand and agree that the Agency may contact other people or organizations to obtain necessary verification of any statements on this application.

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that all my answers are correct and complete to the best of my knowledge, including information about the citizenship and alien status of each household member.

YOUR SIGNATURE	TODAY'S DATE	WITNESS SIGNATURE (If applicant signed with an X)	
AGENCY USE			
Name of Applicant or Authorized Representative			
Interviewed By (OPA Employee Name)			
Interview Date		Application Effective Date	
Date of Application			

AGENCY USE			
Your Interview is Scheduled for:	Date		Time
IF YOU CANNOT KEEP YOUR SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT, PLEASE CALL TO RESCHEDULE.			
VERIFICATIONS			
<p>As requested, you must provide information and verification to help determine if you are eligible for assistance. The Agency may help you obtain the verification or contact other people or agencies to assist you. If you need help with gathering verification, tell the Office of Public Assistance.</p> <p>The following is a list of verifications to bring to the interview or submit with your application, which will speed up the application process:</p>			
Income and Resources			
Award Letters for Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Unemployment Insurance		Financial Statements for Certificates of Deposit or Stocks and Bonds	
Award Notices for Educational Loans, Scholarships, Grants		Burial Policies	
Bank Statements for Checking and Savings Accounts		Pay Stubs	
Child Support and/or Alimony Stubs or Payment Records		Rental Income or Sales Contract Records/Ledgers	
Earnings Statements from Employers		Statements of Loans, Gifts, or Contributions Received	
Federal Income Tax Returns, Bookkeeping Records, Expense Records for self-employment			
Expenses			
Child Support Paid		Medical Expense Bills for the Elderly or Disabled (e.g., medication, doctor/hospital bills, insurance premiums. Include copies of Medicare and health insurance explanation of benefits/payment statements.)	
Dependent Care Bills/Receipts			
Heating/Cooling Bills			
Higher Education Expense Receipts			
Rent Receipt/Mortgage Payment (including home mortgage insurance and property taxes)			
Other			
Commodity Release		School Enrollment Forms	
ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS			